

GLOBAL RESOURCE ACTION CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

June 7, 1999

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Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to voice my opposition to the FDA's Docket #98N-1038 "Irradiation in the production, processing, and handling of food," which will allow manufacturers to sell irradiated food without any labeling requirements that warn consumers of the dangers of buying and eating irradiated food. Food treated with radiation must continue to be labeled clearly with the radura (international symbol for irradiated food) and a visible statement indicated that it was treated with radiation. The absence of such a statement is extremely misleading since radiation destroys vitamins and consumers should know the vitamin content of the fruits and vegetables they purchase in order to compensate for vitamin losses. Irradiation causes changes in sensory qualities and spoilage qualities so that a consumer may reject his or her food without any understanding.

Irradiation also creates a new class of radiolytic products that have never been tested for the possible carcinogenic effects on humans and new volumes of radioactive waste from Cobalt-60 and Cesium. Both the threat of cancer and exposure to toxic radionuclides, at a time when the nation does not know what to do with current nuclear waste levels, is very serious and should be avoided at all costs. Therefore, it is crucial that the FDA retains clear labels for irradiated foods, labels which state "irradiation" or "irradiated" on the product and not the suggested labels of "cold pasteurization" or "electronic pasteurization," for these labels are extremely misleading to the uninformed consumer, who most likely wishes to avoid the hazards of food irradiation.

I urge that Congress and the FDA take action on this issue and force the irradiation labels to remain on foods and that the health of this nation continues to be a priority for both the present and the future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Glenn Dillon
GRACE

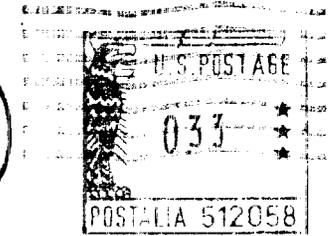
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GRACE

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